



Knysna

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Knysna Municipality bids farewell to Johnny Douglas

Acting Knysna Municipal Manager Dr Richard Martin has confirmed the resignation of Johnny Douglas, Director: Community Services, effective as of 31 October.

“He has served this municipality in many capacities, and has consistently demonstrated exceptional commitment, dedication and a willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty,” Dr Martin said.

Mr Douglas held the office of Municipal Manager from January 2007 until August 2011. He returned to the municipality as Acting Municipal Manager in January 2017 for an initial term of three months, which was extended until Council resolved to make a permanent appointment in June of that year. His appointment as Director: Community Services was announced in December 2024.

“Council and the administration commend Mr Douglas’ strategic leadership, his role in managing the water challenges we face, and his contribution to strengthening and improving the Section 154 intervention process with local and national government,” said Dr Martin.

Mr Douglas thanked Council for the opportunity to serve as the Director of Community Services. “I am equally grateful to my fellow directors and to the dedicated staff of the Community Services Directorate, who continue to serve under challenging circumstances,” he said. “Under difficult conditions we taught each other what service delivery really means.

“Service is picking up waste in the rain, opening a library for a child, cutting grass in the park when no one says ‘thank you’. It is fixing burst and leaking pipes without the necessary equipment - while being short staffed, it is being on standby when the town is sleeping.

“As I leave, I respectfully ask Council, as the custodian of good governance, to provide collective leadership on two matters of particular importance.

“I respectfully appeal to Council to fulfil its oversight responsibilities under section 103 of the Municipal Systems Act, to refrain from direct, indirect or purported interference or instruction in administrative matters, and to uphold the principles of servant leadership in service of the community,” he continued. “When this distinction is respected, officials are empowered to serve all residents without fear or favour and in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Municipal Staff.

“Similarly, when officials abandon impartiality and engage in partisan political activity, they act in direct violation of the relevant Code of Conduct for municipal staff and the pillars of ethical governance and administration. This must at all costs be dealt with by the Accounting Officer. Serving Knysna Municipality and its community has been a privilege, and I depart with deep respect for this institution and confidence in Knysna's future.”

Dr Martin wished Mr Douglas well in his new position. “George Municipality will benefit from our loss,” he concluded. “Mr Douglas takes his integrity, commitment to upholding the highest standards of professional governance and his long-held principles of ethical and non-partisan public service with him on this new chapter of his professional career. We wish him and his family only the best.”

ENDS

Knysna Municipality Communications Department

P O Box 21, Knysna. 6570. Western Cape. South Africa

Tel +27 (0)44 302 6300 (switchboard) or 302 6430 (direct)

E-mail communications@knysna.gov.za